



STATE OF MINNESOTA

Office of Governor Mark Dayton

130 State Capitol ♦ 75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard ♦ Saint Paul, MN 55155

May 3, 2018

Representative Dale Lueck
423 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Representative Dan Fabian
365 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Representative Jason Metsa
313 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Senator Justin D. Eichorn
3213 Minnesota Senate Building
95 University Avenue West
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Senator Bill Ingebrigtsen
3207 Minnesota Senate Building
95 University Avenue West
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Senator David J. Tomassoni
3207 Minnesota Senate Building
95 University Avenue West
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Conference Committee Members:

I understand HF 3280 (SF 2983), the wild rice bill, will be negotiated in your Conference Committee. This creates an opportunity to work with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and my staff to identify a sustainable path forward that will bring families, communities, and businesses throughout Minnesota the certainty they are seeking.

The bill as written is an extreme approach that removes important protections for wild rice, conflicts with federal law, and guarantees ongoing litigation. The proposed legislation does not ensure economic growth on the Iron Range, as any final resolution should and must. If sent to me without modifications, I will be forced to veto the legislation and Minnesota will be left without a practical solution, which is urgently needed.

I recognize the existing 10 mg/L standard is not technically or economically feasible for industries or municipalities. The impact upon taxpayers would be significant, and enforcing the standard now would be detrimental to the mining industry, which has long been a crucial part of Minnesota's economy. I also recognize that the proposed rule changing the standard, while scientifically sound, could not be implemented in a way that provided regulated parties with clear and reasonable expectations. That is why I asked MPCA Commissioner John Stine to withdraw the proposed rule last week.

In order to move forward, we must work together to find common ground. Our solution should ensure we remain in compliance with the federal Clean Water Act and continue to seek innovative solutions to protect wild rice. However, it also needs to create long-term certainty for businesses and municipalities to continue their operations until we develop economically and technically feasible solutions. In addition, it needs to provide comfort and security to families who rely on mining jobs to support themselves.

Minnesotans do not want to go backwards on water quality, and they do not want their government to hide from a difficult challenge. They want us to solve it.

I am confident we can come to agreement on legislation that would accomplish our shared goals and provide long-term relief to families, municipalities and businesses throughout Minnesota. I ask Legislators, representatives of the mining and labor communities, environmental advocates, and Tribal Leaders to work with Commissioner Stine and his staff to find a workable solution before the end of the Legislative Session. My office stands ready to assist in any way needed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Dayton". The signature is stylized with a large, bold "M" and a cursive "Dayton".

Mark Dayton
Governor

cc: Senator Paul E. Gazelka, Senate Majority Leader
Senator Thomas M. Bakk, Senate Minority Leader
Representative Kurt Daudt, Speaker of the House
Representative Joyce Peppin, House Majority Leader
Representative Melissa Hortman, House Minority Leader